

Applicants : Eric David Harper, *et al.*  
Appl. No. : 10/736,038  
Examiner : Murali K. Dega.  
Docket No. : 20503-4023

### **AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

### **LISTINGS OF CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A system, comprising:  
  
a plurality of computers, each computer of the plurality of computers capable of running  
  
a given software application,  
  
a server having a server store,  
  
communication channels respectively permitting communication between each computer  
  
of the plurality of computers and the server, and  
  
a transaction arrangement operable respectively between each computer of the plurality  
  
of computers and the server via the communication channels for enabling a  
  
predetermined use of the given software application by each computer of the  
  
plurality of computers,  
  
wherein the server controls the predetermined use of the given software application by a  
  
first computer of the plurality of computers according to conditions stored in the  
  
server store, wherein the given software application and the first computer are  
  
identifiable by the server using a license, the license having a plurality of license  
  
rights, and wherein a first subset of the plurality of license rights is available  
  
under the license to the first computer of the plurality of computers, and wherein a  
  
~~second subset of license rights is available under the license to a second computer~~  
  
~~of the plurality of computers, and wherein the license, the first subset of the~~

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~~plurality of license rights, and the second subset of the plurality of license rights~~  
~~are voluntarily returnable by the first computer and second computers to the~~  
~~server for use by another computer of the plurality of computers, and wherein the~~  
~~first subset of the plurality of license rights does not include license rights~~  
~~contained within the second subset of the plurality of license rights;~~  
wherein voluntary returning of the license and the plurality of license rights to the server  
comprises the first computer initiating return of the license and the plurality of  
license rights before an expiration of the license and the plurality of license rights.

2. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein the transaction arrangement determines access of each computer of the plurality of computers to the given software application.
3. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein the transaction arrangement determines parameters of operation for the given software application.
4. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein the server controls the number of the plurality of computers authorized to run the given software application.
5. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 1, wherein the given software application comprises a computer program operable under the license, and wherein the transaction arrangement comprises a license management system for verifying the availability for each computer of the plurality of computers of the license for the computer program.

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6. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 5, wherein the license management system controls license rights available under the license, and configures each computer of the plurality of computers to operate according to the license rights.
7. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 5, wherein the license management system stores therein different possible license rights available under the license, selects a license right of the license rights from the server store, and activates the license right for each computer of the plurality of computers.
8. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 7, wherein the each computer of the plurality of computers stores details of the license rights, and updates details on use of the computer program.
9. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 5, wherein the license management system transfers the license from one computer of the plurality of computers to another computer of the plurality of computers, and wherein transferring the license comprises voluntary returning of the license from the first computer to the server so that the server can transfer the license to another computer of the plurality of computers.
10. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 9, wherein the license management system inhibits operation of the computer program on the one computer following the transfer.
11. (Currently Amended) A system, comprising:  
  
an application store associated with each computer of a plurality of computers that stores  
  
a copy of the given software application;

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a license store that stores information concerning a license to operate a given software application, wherein the given software application comprises a computer program operable under the license;

a software identification store that stores identification information relating to the given software application;

a computer identification store that stores identification information relating to each computer of the plurality of computers; and

a transaction arrangement operatively linking the application store, the license store, the software identification store and the computer identification store, the transaction arrangement being responsive to a request from a first computer of the plurality of computers for use of the given software application to verify whether the given software application is available for use by the first computer of the plurality of computers and to transmit to the first computer the license, having a plurality of license rights, to use the given software application in the event that the given software application is so available, wherein ~~a first subset of the plurality of license rights is available under the license to the first computer of the plurality of computers, and wherein a second subset of license rights is available under the license to a second computer of the plurality of computers, and wherein the license, the first subset of the plurality of license rights, and the second subset of the plurality of license rights are voluntarily returnable by the first computer and second computers to the server for use by another computer of the plurality of computers, and wherein the first subset of the plurality of license rights does not~~

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~~include license rights contained within the second subset of the plurality of license rights;~~

wherein voluntary returning of the license and the plurality of license rights to the server comprises the first computer initiating return of the license and the plurality of license rights before an expiration of the license and the plurality of license rights.

12. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 11 comprising a server providing the license store, the software identification store and the computer identification store.
13. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 11, wherein the server controls the number of licenses available for the given software application.
14. (Currently Amended) The system according to claim 13, wherein the server transfers a license from one computer of the plurality of computers to another computer of the plurality of computers, and wherein transferring the license comprises voluntary returning of the license from the first computer to the server so that the server can transfer the license to another computer of the plurality of computers..
15. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 14, wherein the server inhibits operation of the computer program on the first computer following the transfer.
16. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 11 further comprising a license store provided at each computer of the plurality of computers for storing locally information concerning the license.
17. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 11, wherein the transaction arrangement determines parameters of operation for the given software application.

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18. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 11, wherein the transaction arrangement verifies license rights available under the license.
19. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 11, wherein the license store has a data store for storing therein different possible license rights available under the license, and wherein the transaction arrangement selects a license right of the license rights, and activates the license right for each computer of the plurality of computers.
20. (Previously Presented) The system according to claim 19, wherein each computer of the plurality of computers stores details of the license rights, and updates the license rights according to the current state of the license right on use of the computer program.
21. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having stored thereon a plurality of instructions, the plurality of instructions, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:  
  
create a license file for a license to operate the given software application, the license having a plurality of license rights, and wherein ~~a first subset of the plurality of~~ license rights is available under the license to a first computer of the plurality of computers, ~~and wherein a second subset of license rights is available under the~~ license to ~~a second computer of the plurality of computers,~~ and wherein the license, ~~the first subset of the plurality of license rights, and the second subset of~~ the plurality of license rights are voluntarily returnable by the first computer ~~and second computers~~ to the server for use by another computer of the plurality of computers, ~~and wherein the first subset of the plurality of license rights does not include license rights contained within the second subset of the plurality of license~~

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rights; and wherein voluntary returning of the license and the plurality of license rights to the server comprises the first computer initiating return of the license and the plurality of license rights before an expiration of the license and the plurality of license rights

assign to the license file a serial number representing the given software application;  
assign to the license file an identification code representing the first computer;  
transmit to a server a request to execute the given software application, the request including the serial number and the identification code;  
in response to a reply from the server, update the license file with information concerning the availability of the license; and  
read the license file for establishing whether the given software application can be executed.

22. (Previously Presented) The computer readable medium according to claim 21, having additional instructions stored thereon, the additional instructions, when executed by the processor, causing the processor to further:
- in response to reply from the server update the license file with details of license rights transmitted from the server; and
- configure the first computer according to the license rights to execute a predetermined software feature incorporated in the given software application.
23. (Currently Amended) A computer implemented method, comprising:
- creating a license file on a first computer of the plurality of computers for a license to operate the given software application, the license having a plurality of license

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rights, and wherein ~~a first subset of the plurality of license rights is available under the license to the first computer of the plurality of computers, and wherein a second subset of license rights is available under the license to a second computer of the plurality of computers; and wherein the license, the first subset of the plurality of license rights, and the second subset of the plurality of license rights are voluntarily returnable by the first computer and second computers to the server for use by another computer of the plurality of computers; and wherein the first subset of the plurality of license rights does not include license rights contained within the second subset of the plurality of license rights, and wherein~~ voluntary returning of the license and the plurality of license rights to the server comprises the first computer initiating return of the license and the plurality of license rights before an expiration of the license and the plurality of license rights;

license assigning to the license file an identification code representing the first computer; formulating a request to execute the given software application at the first computer, the request including a serial number associated with the given software application and an identification code of the first computer;

transmitting the request with the serial number and the identification code to the server;

in response to a reply from the server updating the license file with information

concerning the availability of the license; and

reading the license file for establishing the status of the license at the first computer.

24. (Currently Amended) The computer implemented method according to claim 23 further comprising:



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storing at the server information concerning license rights available under the license;

in response to the request from the first computer, the server selecting license rights to be applied to the first computer and transmitting details of the selected rights to the first computer;

in response to the reply from the server updating the license file with details of the selected license rights transmitted from the server; and

configuring the first computer according to the selected license rights to execute a predetermined software feature incorporated in the given software application.

25. (Previously Presented) The computer implemented method according to claim 24 further comprising:

updating the license file on an ongoing basis during use of the predetermined feature by the first computer to record a current state of the license; and

when the license is no longer required transmitting details from the updated license file of the current state to the server.